

January 27, 2017

BY ELECTRONIC FILING

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90;
Rural Health Care Support Mechanism, WC Docket No. 02-60 –
Notice of *Ex Parte* Presentation

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On Thursday, January 26, 2017, Anand Vadapalli, Chief Executive Officer of Alaska Communications Systems Group, Inc. ("Alaska Communications"), and I met with Commissioner O'Rielly and Amy Bender. The discussion focused on developments in infrastructure investment and expansion in Alaska. Mr. Vadapalli noted that additional funding for Alaska middle mile infrastructure remains a high priority. Any new funding should be tied to clear and enforceable regulatory safeguards to ensure that the support is used efficiently for the intended purpose, that affordable, non-discriminatory access is available to all, and that recipients are held accountable to their service obligations. Alaska Communications believes the FCC is best positioned to oversee a broadband infrastructure stimulus program.

Increased funding also is needed for the Rural Health Care program, which has remained under the same cap since 1997. Mr. Vadapalli encouraged increasing the budget for broadband to Rural Health Care providers using the surplus from other universal service programs. Finally, Mr. Vadapalli urged more effective oversight of USAC to ensure that the Commission's programs are being implemented in a timely manner through transparent processes. Requests for funding deserve action within a reasonable time frame, and the USAC decision process should be reviewed to ensure it is efficient and effective.

Please direct any questions regarding this matter to me.

Very truly yours,



Karen Brinkmann
Counsel to Alaska Communications